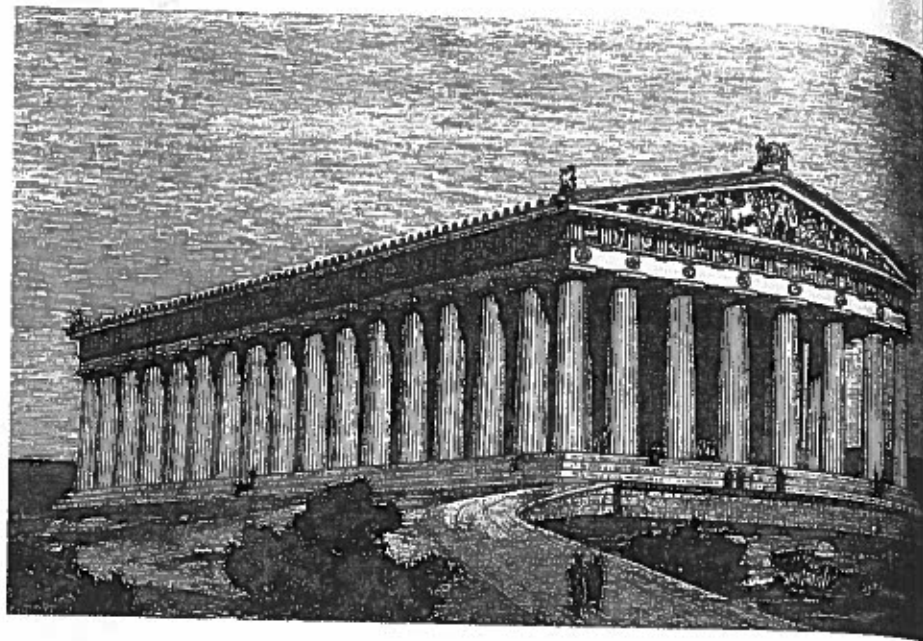


In this painting of the Parthenon, you can see the triangle-shaped pediment and the sculpted figures in the frieze.



architecture the art of designing buildings

Greek buildings use three different styles of columns. Doric columns, the oldest style, have no base. Ionic columns are more graceful than Doric columns. Corinthian columns are the most decorative.



Doric



Ionic



Corinthian

29.4 Architecture: The Acropolis

Temples are good examples of the Greeks' talent for **architecture**. The Greeks built their temples as beautiful dwelling places for the gods and goddesses rather than as places to worship. Religious ceremonies were conducted outside.

The temples show the importance of balance and order in the Greeks' idea of beauty. Temples were built with rows of tall columns. The Greeks used three kinds of columns. The Doric column was the simplest. It had no base and got slimmer toward the top. The Ionic column was thinner. It sat on a base and had spirals carved into the top. The Corinthian column was the most complex, with carvings that looked like leaves at the top.

Athenians built three temples on the acropolis to honor Athena. One of these was the Parthenon. One of the most beautiful temples in Greece, the Parthenon was built on a long rectangular platform. There were 8 columns across both the front and back and 17 along each side. The roof slanted, creating triangles called *pediments* at the front and back of the building. At the top of the temple was a band of sculptures called a *frieze*. The sculptures themselves are called *metopes*.

Greek temples were many different sizes, but their basic shape was similar. Most had a main room with a statue of the temple's god or goddess. The Parthenon had a magnificent statue of Athena that stood 30 feet high. Made of wood, the statue was covered with ivory to look like flesh. Then it was dressed in clothes and decorated with gold. Like the temple itself, the statue expressed both the Greeks' love of beauty and their awe of the gods.